
SPRAY POLYURETHANE FOAM ALLIANCE

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Re: Compliance of Low-Density Spray Polyurethane Foam in California

To Whom It May Concern:

Low-density spray-applied polyurethane foam (LD-SPF), or open-cell spray foam, is a foam plastic building insulation that has a density range of 0.5 to 1.4 lb/ft³ and a high percentage of open cells. LD-SPF use has had a dramatic increase in California and elsewhere due to the ability to restrict air movement as well as heat flow. LD-SPF will play a key role in meeting California's energy conservation goals.

There has been a misunderstanding as to whether LD-SPF conforms to Title 24 requirements. Low-density or open-cell spray polyurethane foams are permitted under Title 24. The R-values of assemblies using LD-SPF are incorporated into Title 24's Joint Appendix 4 (JA4). When raters or building officials need to verify R-values or U-factors for LD SPF, JA4 is the primary information source.

Even though permitted under Title 24, an approved Title 24 installation procedure and QII (Quality Insulation Installation) checklist for LD-SPF is still under development. If third-party inspections are needed to verify that LD-SPF has been installed in a quality manner, refer to the Energy Star Thermal Bypass Checklist Guide and the Energy Star Qualified Homes Thermal Bypass Inspection Checklist. Specifically, the Checklist offers the following guidance:

Alternative methods of meeting the Checklist requirements may be used in completing the Checklist, if the Provider deems them to be equivalent, or more stringent, than the Inspection Checklist guidelines.

The Spray Polyurethane Foam Alliance (SPFA), a non-profit trade association representing all elements of the SPF industry, has been working closely with the California Energy Commission and other state agencies to develop a mechanism for third-party raters to perform QII inspections. To this effect, the SPFA has formed a task force of members consisting of California-based contractors and suppliers with interests in California to facilitate communication between the SPF industry and the State of California.

If, after calling the Energy Standards Hotline (1-800-772-3300), questions remain as to the acceptance or legality of the use of low-density spray polyurethane foams under Title 24, please call the California Energy Commission High Performance Buildings and Standards Development Office directly:

Mr. Payam Bozorgchami 916-654-4618
Mr. David Ware 916-654-4168

Respectfully,

Richard Duncan, Ph.D., P.E.
Technical Director